



WESTERN STAR TRUCKS®

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

RECEIVED

99 MAY -6 ~~APRIL 29~~ 1999

OFFICE
DEFECTS INVESTIGATION

Attention: Associate Administrator for Enforcement

99V-128.001 (U)

Re: Defect Information Report 49 CFR 573.5:

**Production Level 2 Hubs Manufactured by SKF, USA and Received by
Meritor Automotive Between February 1996 and January 1998**
NHTSA File: 97E-196 Meritor File: CWAA

Dear Sir(s):

This Defect Information Report is submitted by:

Western Star Trucks Inc.
2076 Enterprise Way,
Kelowna, British Columbia,
Canada, V1Y 6H8

There are four (4) Western Star trucks which were assembled with the defective hubs. One (1) of the trucks is currently operating in the USA.

Please refer to attached Defect Information Report submitted by Meritor Automotive for applicable information.

Western Star Trucks intends to notify customers who have purchased the Meritor axles with the suspect hubs by May 3, 1999.

We trust that the above information, along with the attached document from Meritor, is fully responsive to the requirements of 49 CFR 573.5. If there are any additions or modifications to the information given will be reported immediately to NHTSA.

If there are any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Regards,
WESTERN STAR TRUCKS INC.


Stephen A. Scott
Compliance Engineer



Meritor Automotive, Inc.
2135 West Maple Road
Troy, MI 48064-7198

94V-128.001 (02)



MERITOR

March 24, 1999

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
400 Seventh Street S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20590

Attention: Associate Administrator for Enforcement

Re: Defect Information Report 49 CFR 573.5:

Production Level 2 Hubs Manufactured by SKF, USA and Received by
Meritor Automotive Between February 1996 and January 1998
NHTSA File: 97E-196 Meritor File: CWAA

Gentlemen:

This Defect Information Report is submitted by:

Meritor Automotive (formerly Rockwell)
2135 West Maple Road
Troy, Michigan 48064

in accordance with the requirements of The National Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 as set forth in 49 CFR Section 573.5 This information is presented to correspond to the sub-paragraphs of Section 573.5(c).

- (2) This report pertains to certain Truck Hub Units (THUs) rated for 13,200 lbs which were manufactured by SKF between February 1996 and January 1998. Meritor Automotive is the sole purchaser of the affected components and the affected hubs were installed solely in Meritor front axle assemblies designated FF-982 and FF-984.

Meritor has based the scope of the affected axles solely on the Notification information provided to Meritor by SKF, USA on February 15, 1999.

March 24, 1999

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94V-123.001 (03)

(3) 214 Meritor front axle assemblies were assembled with the defective hubs. The attached list identifies the purchasers of the affected axle assemblies.

(4) The number of hubs suspected to be defective is 100%

(5) On February 15, 1999 SKF, USA concurrently notified NHTSA and Meritor that SKF has concluded that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in Production Level 2 THUs used in Meritor FF-982 and FF-984 shipped to Meritor from February 1996 to January 1998.

(6) Meritor first became aware of an issue with SKF hubs in May, 1997 following the report on a fractured hub which has been used in a 12,000 lbs rated application. The ensuing investigation concluded with SKF's November 4, 1997 Notification to NHTSA (File 97E-197) that these suspect hubs should be replaced with Production Level 2 hubs.

In the November, 1997 Notification, SKF promised to evaluate the Level 2 THUs in "various application configurations". This final portion of the SKF investigation has concluded with the above-referenced SKF February 15, 1999 Notification to NHTSA.

(7.) This is not an issue of non-compliance to a Federal Safety Standard.

(8) Meritor intends to notify purchasers of the suspect hubs to replace these hubs with Production Level 3 hubs as recommended by SKF, USA.

(9) Representative notices, bulletins, and communications that relate directly to the defect which are sent to the vehicle manufacturers will be submitted to NHTSA not later than five (5) days after they are initially sent.

We trust that the above information is fully responsive to the requirements of 49 CFR 573.5. Any additions or modifications to any of the information given will be reported promptly to NHTSA. Should there be any questions with respect to the information provided, please contact the undersigned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Meritor Automotive



G. T. Bowman

Manager, Product Integrity & Reliability

**Summary of Vehicle Manufacturers Who Purchased
Meritor FF-982 and FF-984 Front Axle Assemblies
Equipped with SKF Production Level 2 Hub Manufactured
Between February 1996 and January 1998**

<u>Purchaser</u>	<u>Front Axle Assemblies</u>
Freightliner Corporation 4747 North Channel Road Portland, OR	13
Kenworth Truck Company 10630 N. E. 38 th Place Kirkland, WA	25
Navistar International Transportation Company 3033 Wayne Trace Ft. Wayne, IN	172
Western Star Trucks 2076 Enterprise Way Kelowna, British Columbia CANADA	4
TOTAL	214

**W-9901**

SAFETY RECALL NOTICE

April, 1999

W-9901 (65)

Dear Western Star Owner:

RE: Western Star Recall Notice W-9901 – Meritor FF-982 Front Axle Hub Units

This notice is sent to you in accordance with the requirements of the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act.

Western Star Trucks Inc. has identified you as an owner of one of the vehicles affected by this Recall. The enclosed "Recall Notice" card identifies your vehicle.

If you do not own the vehicle whose serial number appears on the enclosed recall card, it is *important* that you return this notice to Western Star Trucks Inc. with any information you can furnish that will assist us in locating the present owner. No postage is required, as Western Star will pay the return postage on this card.**Vehicles Affected:**

Western Star Trucks Inc. has determined that a defect which relates to motor vehicle safety exists in four Western Star truck tractors, equipped with Meritor FF-982 front axles. Serial numbers 947074, 947083, 950405, 950902.

The Problem:

Meritor has advised that the hub units on the FF-982 front axle, sold between February, 1996 and January, 1999, are susceptible to fatigue cracking which may result in wheel separation under normal operating conditions.

What You Must Do:

- For your safety Western Star Trucks Inc. **URGES** you to contact your nearest Western Star dealer *immediately* to book a service appointment to have the front hub units replaced.
- The labour time required to modify your vehicle is about one and one half hours. This recall service will be performed at no charge to you regardless of your vehicle's age or mileage.
- Please present the "Recall Notice" card to the dealer where the recall service will be performed.

If your vehicle is not modified within a reasonable time after tendering it to a Dealer at the agreed service date, please contact Western Star Trucks Inc., Compliance and Recall Department, 2076 Enterprise Way, Kelowna, BC, Canada, V1Y 6H8 (Phone: 250-868-6222). United States residents may submit a complaint to the Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, D.C., 20590, or call the toll free Auto Safety Hot-line at 800-424-9393 (Washington, D.C. residents may call 202-366-0123).

We regret any inconvenience this situation may cause, and hope you will share in our concern for your safety and satisfaction with our product.

**WESTERN STAR TRUCKS INC.
VEHICLE REGULATIONS AND COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT**